

The scoping process will include the following:

- Identification of potential issues;
- Identification of issues to be analyzed in depth;
- Elimination of insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental process;
- Exploration of alternative ways to implement the proposed actions based on the issues identified during the scoping process; and
- Determination of environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e. direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by December 1, 1999, the comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, a reviewer of a draft EIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final EIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45 day comment period so that substantive comments and objectives are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions

of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points).

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed in November, 2000. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making the decision regarding this proposal. Rick Scott, District Ranger, is the responsible official and as responsible official, he will document the Chalk Creek Timber Sales project decision and rationale in a record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR Part 215).

Dated: July 12, 1999.

Rick Scott,
District Ranger.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Intergovernmental Advisory Committee Subcommittee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Intergovernmental Advisory Committee will meet on August 5, 1999, at the Embassy Suites Portland Downtown, 319 SW Pine Street, Portland, Oregon 97204-2726. The purpose of the meeting is to continue discussions on the implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and continue until 3:30 p.m. Agenda items to be discussed include, but are not limited to: information sharing on salmon restoration and recovery from the Soil and Water Conservation District perspective; a presentation of the Regional Community Economic Revitalization Team Report; and progress reports on ongoing implementation issues. The IAC meeting will be open to the public and is fully accessible for people with disabilities. Interpreters are available upon request in advance. Written comments may be submitted for the record at the meeting. Time will also be scheduled for oral public comments. Interested persons are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding this meeting may be directed to Don Knowels, Executive Director, Regional Ecosystem Office, 333

SW 1st Avenue, P.O. Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208 (Phone: 503-808-2180).

Dated: July 20, 1999.

Donald R. Knowles,
Designated Federal Official.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Request for Comments on Information Collection Package

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; Comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Housing Service's intent to request approval of an Information Collection Package in support of the program for servicing the Agency's Community Programs loans and grants.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by August 27, 1999 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For inquiries on the Information Collection Package, contact Tracy Gillin, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0039. For program content, contact Beth Jones, Senior Loan Specialist, Community Programs Servicing and Special Authorities Branch, RHS, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., Mail Stop 0787, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0787, Telephone (202) 720-1498, E-mail epjones@rdmail.rural.usda.gov. Comments should be submitted to Ms. Gillin at USDA—Rural Development, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Mail Stop 0742, Washington, DC 20250-0742.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 7 CFR 3570-E, Servicing of Community Programs Loans and Grants.

Type of Request: New information collection.

Abstract: The Rural Housing Service (RHS) is a credit agency within the Rural Development mission area of the United States Department of Agriculture. Rural Development is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public agencies, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes through the Community Facilities program for the development of essential community facilities primarily serving